Events: 1200 to 1750 CE

I. The Post-Classical Era (c. 1200 – 1450 CE)

The Founding of the Seljuk Empire (1037 CE)

- **Relevance:** Established by Central Asian Turks, this empire moved into Persia and Anatolia, setting the stage for Turkic dominance in the Middle East and the eventually ending Byzantine and Arab influence in the Eastern Mediterranean.

The Battle of Manzikert (1071 CE)

- **Relevance:** The Seljuks defeated the Byzantine Empire and conquered most of Anatolia. This loss of a "Christian" territory was a primary catalyst that triggered the **First Crusade** (1095–1099).

The Unification of the Mongols (1206 CE)

- **Relevance:** Genghis Khan unified the nomadic tribes of the Mongol homeland, creating a military force of horseback riders that would establish the largest contiguous land empire in history.

The Rise of the Delhi Sultanate (1206 CE)

- **Relevance:** Following the invasion of Turko-Iranian Mamluks, this Islamic state came to dominate the Indian subcontinent until 1526. It is most significant for being one of the few states to successfully **repel the Mongol invasions** (Chagatai Khanate), saving Indian culture from destruction.

The Mongol Conquest of Samarkand (1220 CE)

- **Relevance:** Genghis Khan seized this strategic Silk Road city, which later became the Islamic center and capital for the conqueror Timur in the 14th century.

The Destruction of the House of Wisdom (1258 CE)

- **Relevance:** Mongol forces sacked Baghdad and destroyed this center of the Islamic Golden Age, which had preserved Greco-Roman and Indian knowledge.

The Mongol Invasion of Anatolia (c. 1260 CE)

- **Relevance:** The Mongols defeated the declining Seljuks and divided Anatolia into **Emirates** (regional states). One of these, the Ottoman emirate, eventually conquered the others to form the Ottoman Empire.

The Solomonic Dynasty's Victory (1270 CE)

- **Relevance:** The Solomonic dynasty defeated the Zagwe dynasty, establishing a rule over the Ethiopian Empire that lasted until 1636 and maintained Ethiopia as a Christian stronghold in East Africa.

The Fall of the Song Dynasty (1279 CE)

- **Relevance:** The Mongolian-led **Yuan Dynasty** (under Kublai Khan) conquered and absorbed the Song Dynasty, marking the first time all of China was ruled by non-Han peoples.

The Fall of Srivijaya (1290 CE)

- **Relevance:** The Java-based **Majapahit Empire** was responsible for the collapse of the Srivijaya kingdom, becoming the dominant maritime power in Southeast Asia until 1500.

The Fragmentation of the Mongol Empire (1294 CE)

- **Relevance:** Following the death of Kublai Khan, the empire split into four **Khanates** (Golden Horde, Chagatai, Ilkhanate, and Yuan Dynasty). This weakened Mongol control, eventually allowing subjects to throw off Mongol rule by the mid-14th century.

The Polynesian Settlement of New Zealand (1200 CE)

- **Relevance:** This marked the end of a 4,000-year migration that began in Taiwan. These migrations spread domesticated animals and crops like bananas and coconuts across the Pacific and Indian Oceans.

The Global Warming Period (750–1100s and 1300s CE)

- **Relevance:** An environmental shift that increased agricultural output by extending growing seasons and allowing farming to move further north.

The Arrival of the Black Death in Eurasia (Mid-14th Century)

- **Relevance:** Spread via Mongol trade routes, the plague killed 75–200 million people (20–40% of the world population), leading to massive social and economic disruption.

The Formation of the Hanseatic League / HANSA (1358 CE)

- **Relevance:** A security agreement between Northern European merchant guilds that acted as a cartel to control prices and protect trade, eventually dominating regional trade with private armies.

The Voyages of Zheng He (1405–1433 CE)

- **Relevance:** A series of state-sponsored naval expeditions from Ming China to the Indian Ocean designed to broadcast Chinese power and establish trade with 30+ kingdoms.

The Execution of Jan Hus (1415 CE)

- **Relevance:** An early example of the Catholic Church's attempt to silence religious reformers, serving as a precursor to the Protestant Reformation.

The Abandonment of Great Zimbabwe (c. 1450 CE)

- **Relevance:** The capital city was left behind due to a decline in trade, exhaustion of gold mines, or climate-induced famine/water shortages.

II. The Early Modern Era (c. 1450 – 1750 CE)

The Fall of Constantinople (1453 CE)

- **Relevance:** The Ottoman Turks sacked the city, ending the Byzantine Empire and establishing the Ottomans as a major gunpowder power.

The Rise of the Songhai Empire (1460s – 1500 CE)

- **Relevance:** Led by **Sunni Ali**, the city of Gao took advantage of Mali’s decline to conquer cities like Timbuktu, forming the largest sub-Saharan state.

The Establishment of the Spanish Inquisition (1478 CE)

- **Relevance:** A ruthless institution created to maintain Catholic orthodoxy by expelling or punishing non-Catholics, particularly Jews and Muslims.

The Conversion of the Kingdom of the Kongo (1491 CE)

- **Relevance:** The **Manikongo** (ruler) converted to Roman Catholicism after contact with the Portuguese, leading to long-term religious and economic ties, including the slave trade.

The Expulsion of Jews from Spain and Portugal (1492 & 1497 CE)

- **Relevance:** Monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella (Spain) and later the Portuguese king expelled Jews and Muslims to consolidate religious control.

Christopher Columbus's First Voyage (1492 CE)

- **Relevance:** Initiated the global age of exploration and the **Columbian Exchange**, leading to the transfer of crops, animals, and diseases (like smallpox) between the Old and New Worlds.

The Treaty of Tordesillas (1494 CE)

- **Relevance:** The Pope split the New World between Spain and Portugal to prevent conflict between the two Catholic empires.

The Portuguese Enforcement of the Cartaz (1502–1750 CE)

- **Relevance:** A mandatory permit for trade that the Portuguese forced upon Indian Ocean merchants through their "trade-post empire" and superior naval guns.

The Battle of Diu (1509 CE)

- **Relevance:** A decisive Portuguese naval victory over Muslim forces for control of the Indian Ocean trade routes.

The Protestant Reformation Begins (1517 CE)

- **Relevance:** Martin Luther wrote the **95 Theses** criticizing Catholic corruption; his ideas spread rapidly via the printing press, ending the religious unity of Western Europe.

The First Siege of Vienna (1529 CE)

- **Relevance:** Allied Catholic states successfully held off an Ottoman land advance into Central Europe.

The Founding of the Mughal Empire (1526 CE)

- **Relevance:** Turco-Mongol invaders defeated the Delhi Sultanate. Under **Akbar the Great** (r. 1555), they consolidated power through religious tolerance and the **zamindar** system.

The Reign of Ivan the Terrible / Ivan IV (1547–1584 CE)

- **Relevance:** He centralized Russian power by crushing the **boyars** (nobles) through the **Oprichnina terror** and expanded territory to form the Russian Empire.

The Battle of Lepanto (1571 CE)

- **Relevance:** A massive naval conflict where Christian European states won control of the Mediterranean Sea from the Ottoman Empire.

The Founding of the British East India Company (1600 CE)

- **Relevance:** A private **charter company** that used joint-stock investment to explore, build ships, and establish colonies, functioning as a small government for Britain.

The Thirty Years War (1618–1648 CE)

- **Relevance:** The final major religious war in Europe involving all major powers; it resulted in the decline of Spain and the rise of France as the dominant world power.

The Initiation of Sakoku (1630s CE)

- **Relevance:** In response to the **Shimabara Rebellion** (1637), the Tokugawa Shogunate cut Japan off from the outside world, punishing foreign interaction with death to ensure domestic peace.

The Catalan Revolt (1640–1659 CE)

- **Relevance:** A conflict in Spain where the Principality of Catalonia rebelled against the king; Spain ceded territory to France as a result, weakening the Spanish monarch.

The Fall of the Ming / Rise of the Qing (1644 CE)

- **Relevance:** Northern Manchu invaders seized China, keeping the Confucian exam system to control the Han population while enforcing the **queue** hairstyle as a sign of dominance.

The Fronde (1648–1653 CE)

- **Relevance:** A series of civil wars in France where nobles unsuccessfully resisted the centralization of **Louis XIV**; the king’s victory strengthened absolute monarchal control.

The Establishment of the Asante Empire (1670 CE)

- **Relevance:** Osei Tutu unified the Ashanti Kingdom in modern-day Ghana using the **Golden Stool** as a divine symbol, creating a disciplined and effective military state.

Metacom’s War / King Philip’s War (1675–1678 CE)

- **Relevance:** The deadliest war in the history of American colonization, fought between New England colonists and Indian inhabitants; it fostered a sense of independence among settlers.

The Second Siege of Vienna (1683 CE)

- **Relevance:** Catholic forces defeated the Ottomans a second time, effectively ending the Ottoman threat to land-based Europe.

The Founding of St. Petersburg (c. 1703 CE)

- **Relevance: Peter the Great** moved the Russian capital to the Baltic coast to establish a maritime trade empire and modernize Russia along Western lines.

The Boston Bread Riots (1710s CE)

- **Relevance:** Social unrest in the American colonies caused by goods shortages as resources were diverted to fund European wars.